

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the first paragraph on page 9 with the following amended paragraph:

Many gas ejection holes 18 are provided in the shower head 16, above which a gas inlet port 16a is provided. A gas diffusion space ~~7-17~~ is formed between the shower head 16 and the ceiling of vacuum chamber 1. The gas inlet port 16a communicates via a gas supply duct 15a to a gas supply system 15 that supplies reaction and diluted gases for etching.

Please replace the third paragraph on page 9 with the following amended paragraph:

A gas exhaust port 19 is provided at the sidewall of the lower part 1b of vacuum chamber 1, and communicates with a gas exhaust system 20 which is used to maintain the vacuum chamber 1 at a desired negative pressure level by operating a vacuum ~~pemppump~~. Further, the lower part 1b of the vacuum chamber 1 is provided at a higher vertical position of its sidewall with a gate valve 24 for introducing a semiconductor wafer into, and withdrawing it out of, the vacuum chamber 1.